

lays. They ran about the curiosity shops together; they felt a joyful passion for buying; and he now satisfied the old longings of his youth, the romanticist aspirations which the first books he had read had engendered. Thus this writer, who was so fiercely modern, lived amid the worm-eaten middle ages which he had dreamed of when he was a lad of fifteen. As an excuse, he laughingly declared that handsome modern furniture cost too much, whereas with old things, even common ones, you immediately obtained some effect and colour. *There was nothing of the collector & out him*, his one concern was decoration, broad effects; and to tell the truth, the drawing-room, lighted by two lamps of old silverware, derived quite a soft, warm tone from the dull gold of the damasks used for upholstering the seats, the yellowish incrustations of the Italian cabinets and Dutch show-cases, the faded hues of the Oriental door-hangings, the hundred little notes of the ivory, the crockery and the enamel work, pale with age, which showed against the dull red hangings."¹

No doubt, among the great quantity of tapestry, carved wood, old furniture, pottery, church embroideries, and so forth, which Zola thus gathered together, there were occasionally things which did not suggest the best taste or the greatest accuracy of judgment. But the statement [noted above shows that he disclaimed collecting in the ordinary sense, and made purchases solely for

decorative
 purposes. And, in any case, even if he
 bought a few
 things whose only recommendation was their
 quaintness,
 he accepted an object as genuine when an
 expert would
 have known it to be spurious, his
 transgressions in those
 matters were of no importance to the world
 at large, and
 he is surprised that some of his " candid
 friends " should
 have thought it worth while to expatiate on
 them.

i "L'CEuvre,"p. 435.